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A study made to ascertain the current status of policies and practices relating to admission and retention of students in Oklahoma and several selected colleges and universities in other States, to seek information, suggestions, and data from the institutions which would be valuable to the State Regents for policy-making, and to seek recommendations from professional groups with regard to the admission and retention of students. Discusses problems of predicting college performance, pros and cons of selective admission, and current policies and practices with regard to student admission and retention.

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A Study of The Admission and Retention of Students

A Staff Report to
The Okahoma State Regents for Higher Education
State Capitol, Oklahoma City

January, 1962

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are pleased to send you this copy of the report of a study of student admission and retention policies.

It is hoped that you may find the contents of this report interesting reading and perhaps useful.

E. T. Dunlap
Chancellor

A STUDY OF
THE ADMISSION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

A Staff Report to
The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
State Capitol, Oklahoma City

Research Accomplished By
Dan S. Hobbs
Research Assistant

January, 1962

FOREWORD

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are responsible for prescribing and publishing the requirements for admission to and retention in the institutions of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. The purpose of this staff report is to ascertain the status of policies and practices relating to admission and retention of students in (1) institutions of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education; (2) other states having some form of state-wide coordination of higher education; and (3) selected colleges and universities outside Oklahoma similar in type, purpose, and function to those in this state. The findings of this study should be helpful as background information to the State Regents as they deliberate and formulate policy for Oklahoma.

Because of unusual interest in the problem, this special staff study has been made pending the accomplishment of the comprehensive state-wide self-study of Oklahoma higher education now under way, the organization and plans for which include further study of admission and retention of students.

The response to questionnaires sent in the course of this study was excellent. All eighteen Oklahoma institutions, sixty-two of the seventy-two selected out-of-state colleges and universities and all agencies of the sixteen states responded. Many of these not only completed and returned the questionnaires, but also furnished other data and printed reports which were most helpful in the development of this report. For this assistance, the staff of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is most grateful.

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Part One

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, under Article XIII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution, have the responsibility for "prescribing standards" for the institutions comprising The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. The statute which vitalized Article XIII-A elaborated upon this function as follows:

> Under their Constitutional authority to prescribe standards for higher education, the Regents shall annually publish such requirements for admission to, retention in, and graduation from any or all institutions in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, as they may deem necessary in the public service.[1]

The problem confronting the State Regents on admission and retention of students is this: What constitutes an effective policy or policies on admission and retention of students in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education? Should the policies be uniform at all institutions in the State System? Should policies be uniform for groups of institutions having like functions and purposes? Or, should policies be unique for individual institutions? Should standards for admission and retention be more selective? If so, how and to what extent?

In the fall of 1961, the State Regents authorized a study of admission and retention to be conducted by the Chancellor and his staff, in conjunction with the Council of Presidents of the Oklahoma State System. The report, it is hoped, will be

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[1] Title 70, Section 1978, Oklahoma Statutes 1951, Vol. II, p. 984.

helpful to the State Regents in their formulation of policies on admission and retention of students in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

Purposes of the Study

In brief, the purposes of the study were: (1) to ascertain the current status of policies and practices relating to admission and retention of students in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, in certain other states having some form of statewide coordination in higher education, and in certain selected institutions of higher education over the nation similar in type and function to those in Oklahoma; (2) to seek information, suggestions and data from these institutions and agencies which might be of value to the State Regents in their policy deliberations; and (3) to seek recommendations from interested professional groups in Oklahoma with regard to the admission and retention of students.

Procedures

In order to accomplish the above purposes, the following procedures were employed:

1. Questionnaires were mailed to the eighteen institutions of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

2. Questionnaires were mailed to the executive officers of coordinating agencies in sixteen other states having some formal responsibility for coordinating higher education at the state level.

3. Questionnaires were mailed to seventy-two colleges and universities in other states similar in type and function to Oklahoma institutions.

4. The Oklahoma High School-College Articulation Committee was invited to contribute suggestions and recommendations relating to student admissions.[2]

5. The Council of Presidents of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education was requested to make suggestions and recommendations regarding the matter of improving policies on admission and retention of students.

Limitations

This report is based on data obtained from official college bulletins, questionnaires returned by participating state systems and institutions, and findings of recent research pertaining to admission and retention of college students. The sixteen state systems and sixty-two public senior colleges and universities included in this study were carefully selected so that the data would have particular significance for Oklahoma.[3] The sixteen state systems all have state-level responsibility for coordinating higher education; the sixty-two public senior colleges and universities are similar to Oklahoma state colleges and universities in size, function and purpose. It should be recognized, therefore, that the data may not have significance for all states.

In this study, data from recent state and national studies were used to estimate the possible impact of certain admissions policies in Oklahoma. While this may be adequate for a cursory examination, it probably is not sufficiently

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[2]This committee is composed of representatives from both public schools and higher education institutions in the state as well as members from the State Department of Education and the staff of The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

[3]Usable responses were received from sixty-two of the seventy-two selected public senior colleges and universities.

precise for policy determination at either the institutional or state level. Before the potential impact of various selective admission or retention policies can be fully evaluated, it is desirable to obtain information on the characteristics of students who now go to college in Oklahoma.

All of the thirty-six state colleges included in this study offer the bachelor's degree, and all twenty-six state and land-grant universities offer t doctorate. The only data obtained on two-year colleges pertain to those located in Oklahoma. Unless otherwise indicated, therefore, reference to state colleges and universities in this study includes only institutions that offer at least a four-year degree program.

Part Two

THE PROBLEM

Perhaps no single area of research in higher education has generated so much interest or controversy as has the admission and retention of college students. During the past ten years alone, some 600 formal admission and retention studies have been catalogued, with perhaps as many more unreported studies accomplished by admissions officers in the course of their regular institutional duties.[1] The fact that hundreds of these studies have been done in the past four decades attests to the complexity and persistency of the problems involved, and the fact that studies such as this one are constantly in progress shows that universal answers to admission and retention problems have not yet been found.

Why The Problem

American state colleges and universities traditionally have held open the doors of opportunity to all high school graduates within their respective state boundaries. Before World War II, only an occasional state university and almost no state-supported four-year colleges maintained admission policies which limited enrollments to any appreciable degree. Most people have assumed, and in many states legislation guarantees, that public colleges and universities are open to all high school graduates.

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[1]Joshua A. Fishman and Ann K. Pasanella, "College Admission Selection Studies," Review of Educational Research, Vol. XXX, No. 4, October 1960, p. 298.

With the great influx of students following World War II, however, and particularly since the early 1950's, many institutions have been forced to re-examine their historical positions in the light of actual or impending pressures upon faculty and facilities. One by one, each public college and university, each state agency responsible for public policy in higher education is asking itself the same question, "Shall we endeavor to spread our resources to meet the demands of a greatly enlarged student body, or shall we husband our resources and curtail the proportion of young people to whom we open the doors of our institutions of higher education?" Thus a major factor which has led to the current concern for more selective admissions policies is the thought that financial resources may not keep pace with increasing enrollments.

A second contributing factor is the concern for maintaining and improving the level of quality in higher education. Rising increases in college enrollments have prompted citizens and educators alike to wonder if this growing number of students will inevitably lead to a "watering down" of college courses.

It is debatable at this point whether a concern for greater quality in higher education or a lack of resources or both has triggered the recent interest in selective admissions at the level of the public institution. No matter what lies behind the recent concern, however, the problems are very much with us at the moment, and thoughtful solutions will need to be forthcoming at every level if we are to go forward.

Philosophy of the Problem

The admission and retention of students in public colleges and universities is but one aspect of a larger societal concern, namely the identification, development

and utilization of human resources within the society. Fifty years ago fewer than five per cent of the high school graduates went on to college. In 1960, over forty per cent of the high school graduates were continuing and studies suggest that the proportion continuing may approach fifty per cent by 1970.[2] Society is therefore charging American higher education with increasingly greater responsibilities.

A nation which once asked its colleges to turn out a few qualified ministers, medical doctors, lawyers and teachers now also looks to higher education to guarantee the proficiency of business executives, agricultural technicians, scientists, engineers, social workers, public health officials, civil service employees, foreign service personnel, linguists, psychologists, dieticians, nurses, hospital administrators, statisticians, accountants and librarians - to mention a few. It is not uncommon for industry or business to demand that their secretarial force be college trained. Thus, a college education is becoming increasingly necessary to enter occupations, as well as the professions, and in the next two or three decades it may become necessary to succeed in almost all fields of endeavor.

Colleges and universities are facing exactly the same problems of increasing enrollment, and for many of the same reasons, as did the high schools in the first quarter of this century. In the latter case, society allowed "universal" enrollment. Up to the present time, the concept of "universality" of college opportunity has followed a similar pattern. This has prompted citizens and educators alike to pose

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[2]The proportion of Oklahoma high school graduates who go on to college already exceeds fifty per cent.

these fundamental questions. "Should public higher education be provided for all high school graduates, or should admission to college be selective?" If opportunity is provided for all, "Should all students be permitted to enroll in institutions of their choice or should admissions be selective at some institutions?"

Until the enrollment pressures of the 1950's began to mount, admission and retention was almost wholly a concern of the individual college or university. Recently, however, state after state has become concerned as student applications for admission have begun to exceed available space and resources. Within the past five years, several states have adopted restrictive admissions policies applying to all public senior colleges and universities within their respective borders. A number of other states are studying the problem. The area of student admissions to public colleges and universities is more and more recognized as being in the realm of state-level policy, and is becoming correspondingly less an exclusive concern of individual institutions.

Problems in Predicting College Performance

Perhaps the problem of predicting college performance can best be stated by posing several questions: Is it possible to predict who will succeed and who will fail in college? What factors are the most dependable in predicting college performance? Are present standards for testing and examining potential students efficient and satisfactory? If not, how can they be improved?

The task of identifying students who will succeed in college is exceptionally difficult. There is probably little debate as to whether a qualified student should go to college; but there are wide differences of opinion as to just what constitutes

"qualified." Nearly all of America's senior colleges and universities require a high school diploma as one criterion for admission.[3] With this single exception, criteria used by college admissions officers to select students vary not only in terms of those used, but they also vary as to the level of achievement required on the measurements used.

Considerable research has been done and is currently under way regarding the prediction of future success or failure of individual students who are admitted to college. Most of these studies recognize that the prediction of college achievement depends not only upon the standards of criteria used, but also upon the type of college to which the student is admitted. Colleges have different educational programs, and the characteristics required for successful achievement in these programs may be quite different. Colleges also vary in terms of the abilities of students admitted. Some colleges are so selective that most of their graduates are well above the average of all college graduates. On the other hand, some colleges are less selective and their graduates are below the average of all college graduates.

Factors most commonly used in predicting college performance are listed below. Of these, most studies which have been done show that high school percentile rank is the best single predictor of college performance and the second best predictor is average high school grade.[4]

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[3]Many colleges make exceptions for veterans or mature adults who demonstrate they have the equivalent of a high school education by successful performance on the General Educational Development Test of The American Council on Education.

[4]B. G. Fricke, "Prediction, Selection, Mortality, and Quality Control," College and University, Vol. 32, No. 1, Fall 1956, p. 38.

1. Rank in high school class.

2. Average high school grade.

3. Scores on standardized aptitude and/or achievement tests.

4. Recommendations of high school officials.

5. Grades in selected high school subjects.

6. Student interviews.

7. Participation in high school extra curricular activities.

Research indicates that a combination of two or more of the better selective criteria provides a far better measure of college performance than does any single factor. Each predictor used sheds a somewhat different light on the student's potentialities and each identifies some future high achievers.

Despite the improvement in predictive techniques over the past few years there is as yet no magic "cut off" point above which all students will succeed and below which all will fail. Given the opportunity, some students in the lowest ten per cent will succeed and some in the top ten per cent will fail. There are rather accurate ways of determining the odds of success or failure of a total group, but the predictions break down when applied to individuals. It can be predicted, for example, that the odds of success of 100 students of a given ability level are three in four. It is known, therefore, that seventy-five will succeed in college and twenty-five will fail. However, the seventy-five individuals who will succeed and the twenty-five who will fail cannot as yet be identified.

Even though selection standards are imperfect, they have been found to provide a far better measure of potential ability than individual, subjective judgment.

The general tendencies are clear enough so that predictions can be safely and helpfully expressed in terms of probabilities or expectancies. For example, fourteen-year-olds with a test score of eighty on the A. G. C. T. (Army General Classification Test) scale have about sixty chances out of 100 of entering high school and twenty-three chances out of 100 of graduating, about five chances out of 100 of entering college and only one chance out of 100 of graduating. With a test score of 120, the chances would be increased to ninety-eight in 100 for entering high school, ninety for graduating, thirty-seven for entering college and twenty-five for graduating.[5]

Pros and Cons of Selective Admissions

There are wide differences of opinion as to what proportion of the college age population should be permitted to go to college. Bowles, representing the point of view of those who advocate selective admissions, suggests that college is for students who are "above average in ability," which he defines as any high school graduate with an I. Q. of 110 or above.[6] (Slightly more than one-fourth of the population have an I. Q. of 110 or above.) Hollinshead also believes that preference should be given to educating the top quarter in ability. He points out that this would be equal to approximately the upper one-half of the high school graduating class.

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[5]Dael Wolfle, America's Resources of Specialized Talent, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 176.

Frank H. Bowles, How To Get Into College, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1958), p. 6.

Research confirms that the probabilities for college graduation are constantly reduced for persons with an I.Q. of less than 110.[7]

On the other hand, there are those who disagree with the contention that only those who are above average in ability should be allowed to attend college. A study at the University of Kansas revealed that if the "cutting score" at the fiftieth centile had been used on the freshman class which eventually graduated from the University of Kansas in 1955, the nation would have lost forty teachers, twenty-two engineers, five journalists, seven lawyers, seven doctors, seven pharmacists, and ninety-six liberal arts college and business school graduates.[8] Put in these terms, the argument against selective admissions carries a great deal of conviction.

Following are summarized several of the arguments most commonly advanced by the proponents of selective admissions and opposing arguments frequently given by those who do not favor the principle of selective admissions. No effort has been made herein to evaluate the relative merits of these arguments.

Arguments For

1. Selection is becoming necessary to conserve time, money and scarce educational facilities. In the face of classroom and teacher shortages and of rising costs, the public cannot afford to devote space and teachers to students who are not capable of doing college-level work.

2. Selection is becoming necessary in order to maintain the quality of public higher education. The presence of an increasing number of low ability students inevitably will lead to a "watering down" of college courses.

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[7]Byron S. Hollinshead, Who Should Go To College, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 38.

[8]George B. Smith, Who Would Be Eliminated, A Study of Selective Admissions To College, (University of Kansas, Kansas Studies in Education, Vol. 7, No. 1, December 1956), p. 28.

3. Selection does not violate an American tradition. It is possible to have selectivity of students and at the same time educate everyone to the level of his ability.

4. Selection is necessary in order to develop the abilities of the most capable youth. Our survival as a nation requires that talent be identified, encouraged, and educated to the maximum potential.

5. Selection keeps high school-level work out of colleges. By admitting only those students who are capable of doing college-level work the colleges will not have to spend time and resources providing remedial courses.

6. Selection saves the student time and money and protects him from psychological damage.

Arguments Against

1. Selection violates the principle of "equality of opportunity." Because of the financial advantages that accrue from a college education all youth should have an opportunity to attempt college work.

2. Methods of predicting college achievement are imperfect. Selection unjustly penalizes some students because no selection procedure is infallible in predicting college success.

3. Selective admissions penalizes the "late bloomers."

4. Selective admissions creates the impression that institutions that do not have such policies are "second-rate colleges." If one institution in a state adopts such a policy, other state institutions must follow its lead out of self protection.

5. Selection is psychologically damaging to those rejected. A student who is given an opportunity and then fails will be less frustrated than if he is deprived of the opportunity to try.

6. Selective admissions is bad for college public relations.

Summary of Current Practices with Regard to Student Attrition

Getting into college is becoming an increasingly difficult experience. The evidence indicates that state-supported institutions - particularly state universities -

are progressively adopting more selective admissions policies. Following are the more common approaches being taken by institutions and by state systems with regard to student selection. Each has distinct consequences, and each is worth appraising.

Institutional Approaches

1. Maintain relatively low admission standards, but grade rigorously in order to weed out those who do not successfully meet the retention standards.

2. Maintain relatively low admissions standards, but require less able students to remain in non-degree programs.

3. Maintain relatively low admission standards for matriculation in a "general college," but require relatively high achievement in order to be admitted into degree programs offered in other colleges or schools within the institution.

4. Maintain relatively low admissions standards, but require less able students to enroll during terms when the enrollment is normally low (either the winter semester, winter or spring quarter, or summer term).

5. Maintain a program of "persuasive counseling" for applicants whose credentials show they are poor academic risks. Applicants who are less able are encouraged to apply for admission to other colleges, but the final decision is left to the student.

6. Maintain high admissions standards, but permit less able students to enroll in special summer term programs to determine if they are capable of successfully doing college-level work.

7. Maintain high admissions standards and deny enrollment to all students who do not meet those standards.

State-Level Approaches

1. Permit each state college and university to establish its own admissions policies.

2. Establish uniform admissions policies which are applicable to all institutions within the system.

3. Establish uniform admissions policies for groups of institutions having like functions and purposes.

4. Establish separate admissions policies for each institution based on individual institutional functions and programs.

Summary

The foregoing are but a few of the considerations involved in the area of public policy formulation relating to the admission and retention of students. Policy decisions regarding the admission of students to college should take into consideration (1) varying abilities and individual differences of students, (2) difficulties in accurately predicting individual performance of college level work, and (3) differences in institutional functions and purposes. The question of who should be allowed to go to college should also be considered in the context of each state's philosophic, economic and governmental framework.

The admission and retention of students in public colleges and universities is but one aspect of a larger societal concern, namely the identification, development, and utilization of human resources - both leaders and followers - to the greatest extent possible.

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Part Three

STUDENT ADMISSIONS

There are basically three types of admissions policies, which have been described as follows: (1) "Open Admissions," or open in the sense that all who meet simple minimum requirements are eligible to enroll; (2) "Selective Admissions," designed to eliminate only the students with the poorest chances of survival in college; and (3) "Competitive Admissions," designed to select the choice students from a number of highly qualified applicants.[1] Almost all the restrictive policies which have been adopted by public institutions thus far could be placed in the "Selective" category.

Who Goes To College

In one sense, even those public institutions which practice "Open" admissions can be said to be selective in nature. Although the percentage of students going on to college from high school has doubled in the past thirty years, the chances that a young person of college age will be enrolled in an institution of higher learning are still only about one in three.[2] Of 100 students who begin their first grade year to-

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[1] Frank H. Bowles, "The Evolution of Admissions Requirements," College Admissions, (Princeton, New Jersey, College Entrance Examination Board, 1956), p. 33.

[2] Paul Heist, "The Entering College Student - Background and Characteristics," Review of Educational Research, Vol. XXX, No. 4, October 1960, p. 285.

gether, only about sixty will graduate from high school;[3] and of the sixty who graduate from high school, not more than thirty will seek entrance into a college or university.[4] Since seven out of ten college-age youth do not even file an application for admission to college, even a policy which imposes standards that are relatively easy to meet can hardly be referred to as non-selective in its application.

The most important single characteristic concerned with college-going has been found to be ability. According to a recent national sampling, about eight out of ten graduating high school students who are in the top ten percent of their class in ability plan to go on to college. For those in the top thirty per cent, it was found that nine out of ten men and six out of ten women planned to enroll in a college or university.[5] A Wisconsin state-wide survey in 1956 revealed that approximately sixty per cent of all Wisconsin graduates in the upper half of their high school classes planned to attend some institution of higher learning. The great majority of those in the lower two-thirds in ability were not planning to attend college.[6] Other surveys have generally yielded similar findings.[7]

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[3]Byron S. Hollinshead, Who Should Go To College, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), p. 11.

[4]Frank H. Bowles, How To Get Into College, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1958), p. 1.

[5]Paul Heist, op. cit., p. 289.

[6]Joint Staff Study XXII, "High School Programs and College Attendance in Wisconsin," (July 1959) mimeographed, p. 8.

[7]Paul Heist, op. cit., pp. 289-290.

In addition to high ability, high scholastic achievement also distinguishes the college-going student from his non-going counterpart. A national study which has been used as a baseline of comparison for most later studies on college attendance was done by Dael Wolfle in 1954.[8] Wolfle found that there is a definite and continuous positive relationship between a student's scholastic rank in high school and the probability of his enrollment in and graduation from college. Figure 1, page 20 gives the percentages of those who enter college from each high school achievement level and the probabilities of graduation for each category.

Wolfle's findings reveal that only one in six who ranks in the lowest fifth of the high school class scholastically can be expected to enroll in college, while more than one in two enrolls from the highest fifth. According to Figure 1, only seventeen out of 100 students who ranked in the lowest fifth of their high school class enrolled in college and only four of the seventeen graduated from college. At the other extreme, fifty-three of 100 high school graduates who ranked in the highest fifth went to college and forty-three of the fifty-three graduated.

A second way of determining who goes to college is to analyze the composition of various college freshman classes in terms of students' scholastic rank in their high school graduating class. Figure 2, page 21 shows three such entering freshman classes. The typical freshman class, based on the national figures supplied by Wolfle, draws about ten per cent of its students from the lowest fifth of their high school graduating classes. Three times as many students are enrolled from the high-

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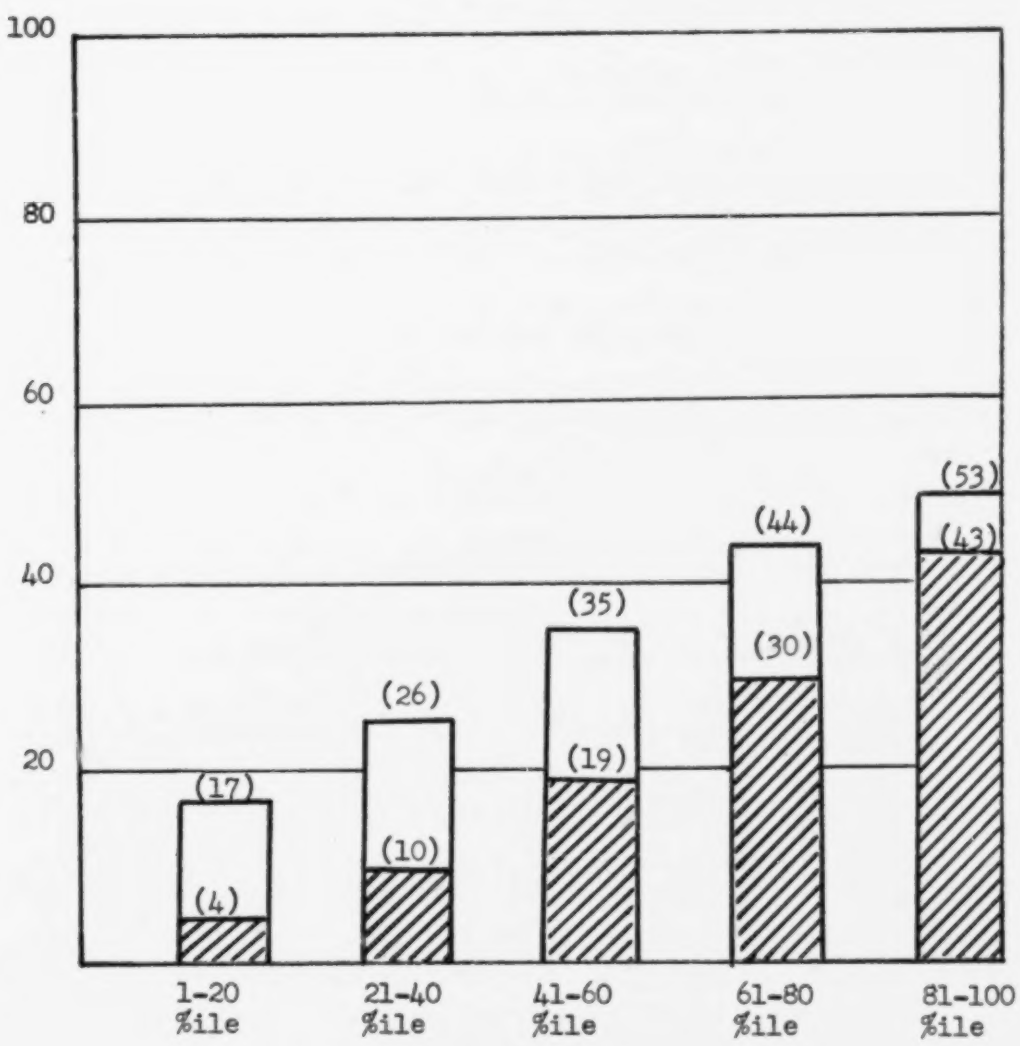
[8]Dael Wolfle, America's Resources of Specialized Talent, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 332.

FIGURE 1

NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES PER 100

WHO ENTER COLLEGE AND WHO GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE,

BY RANK IN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS[1/]



Key

Number per 100 who enter college.

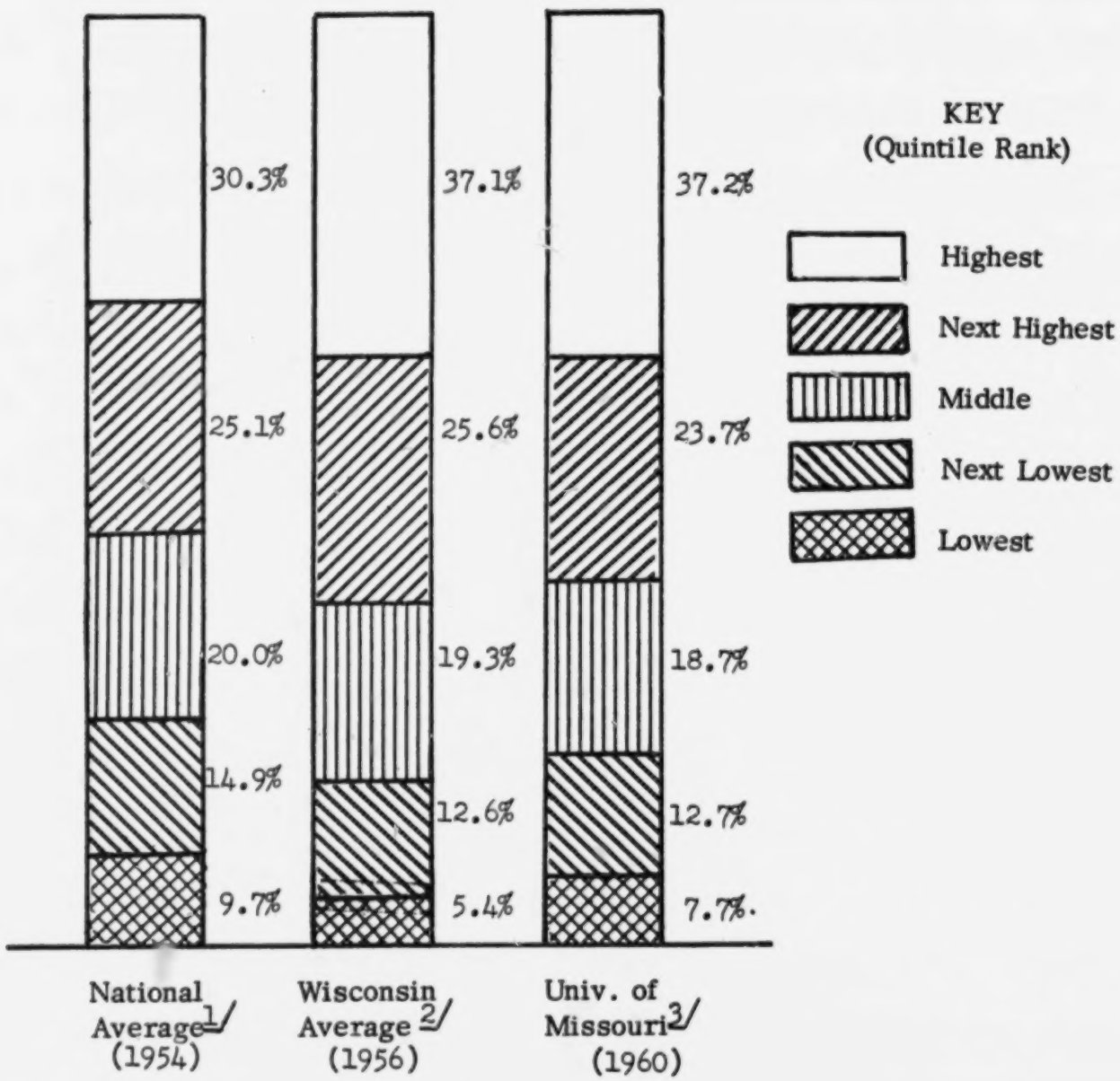
Number per 100 who graduate from college.

1/ Source: Dael Wolfle, America's Resources of Specialized Talent, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 150.

FIGURE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF FRESHMAN CLASS BY QUINTILE

RANK IN HIGH SCHOOL CLASS



1/ Based on data from Dael Wolfle, America's Resources of Specialized Talent, p.150.

2/ Based on data from Wisconsin Joint Staff Report, "Who Goes To College," Background Studies IV, 1957.

3/ Based on University of Missouri Report, 1961.

est fifth, however, since 30.3 per cent come from this category. Wolfle found that 55.4 per cent of the average college freshman class comes from the upper two-fifths of the high school graduating class.

A study of the Wisconsin state-supported colleges and universities in the fall of 1957 revealed that 62.7 per cent of the resident students in that state's institutions were drawn from the upper two-fifths of their high school class while only 5.4 per cent came from the lowest fifth. Figure 2 also shows how a typical state university freshman class compares with the national and the Wisconsin averages. A University of Missouri report based on the freshman class of 1960 was used for this purpose. The percentages derived from the University of Missouri study are surprisingly similar to those which apply to the State of Wisconsin.

High ability and high achievement are but two of the characteristics which distinguish the college-going student from his non-going counterpart. If he lives in a community which contains a college, a student's chances of attending are better than if he lives at some distance from an institution of higher learning. One whose parental income is high has a better statistical chance of attending than one whose parents earn less; and a student whose father is engaged in a professional occupation is more likely to enroll than one whose father is engaged in a skilled or semi-skilled occupation. Boys have better statistical chances of going to college than do girls of equal capability.[9]

At this time, accurate data on the academic characteristics of freshmen enrolled in Oklahoma public colleges and universities are not available. For this

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[9]Byron S. Hollinshead, op. cit., p. 33.

reason it is not possible to estimate accurately the possible impact of alternative selective admission policies upon the number of Oklahoma high school graduates who now go to college. However, rough estimates may be made using Wolfle's data reported in Figure 1.

Assuming Wolfle's findings on the distribution of freshmen by quintile rank approximates the distribution of freshmen in Oklahoma public colleges and universities, this would suggest that about ten per cent of the Oklahoma 1961 freshman class ranked in the lower one-fifth of their graduating class. There were approximately 15,000 freshmen enrolled in colleges and universities in the State System during the fall of 1961. Thus, there may be approximately 1,500 students (10%) in the lower fifth.

A policy restricting college admission to all those above the twentieth percentile in their high school graduating class thus might have affected as many as 1,500 freshmen in 1961. This would include both resident and out-of-state freshmen enrolled in college that fall. The two state universities in Oklahoma presently enroll approximately 6,000 freshmen. Of this number, approximately ten per cent, or 600 students, probably would rank in the lower fifth according to Wolfle's findings. Thus, a policy which restricted admission at the two state universities to the upper four-fifths could affect as many as 500 to 700 students.

State-Level Policies and Practices

In 1960, a questionnaire was sent to the attorneys general of all fifty states inquiring about their practices with regard to admission of students in their public

colleges and universities.[10] Eleven states indicated that there were statutes or regulations in effect which required their institutions of higher learning to accept high school graduates. Another ten states had no such legal requirements, but their practices provided for admission of all secondary school graduates. It may be assumed from this study, if the information is now accurate, that approximately two out of five states admit to their higher institutions all graduates from accredited high schools. Generally, Eastern states do not require their institutions to accept all applicants who apply for admission; only Maryland in this section does so in practice.

In connection with the Oklahoma study, questionnaires were sent to sixteen boards and other agencies which have some formal responsibility for coordination of higher education at the state level. (See Appendix "A" for a list of these boards and agencies.) Of those responding, four indicated that there was a system-wide policy of selective admissions for their states. Three states had system-wide policies requiring the admission of all high school graduates, while nine states left the matter of admission to the individual institutions within the system.

The policies of four states which place academic restrictions on enrollment in their public senior colleges and universities will be reviewed below. These states - Arizona, Florida, Iowa, and Oregon - have single agencies of coordination at the state level.

Arizona

(1) To be eligible for admission to any of the three state-supported institutions in Arizona an applicant must be at least sixteen years of age, must be a graduate of

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[10] R. Gram Lloyd, School and Society, November 19, 1960, p. 446.

an accredited secondary school, must have ranked in the upper three-fourths of his graduating class, and must have completed sixteen high school units from a specified list of courses.

(2) Those applicants who do not meet the "unqualified" admission requirements may be enrolled provisionally after pre-admission counseling and testing. Such admission is at the discretion of the institution.

Florida

(1) An applicant who has a "C" average in high school academic subjects and who scores in the upper forty per cent of Florida high school seniors on a special test is eligible for admission to any of the four Florida state universities. Students who meet these requirements will be given priority in admission and in housing assignments.

(2) An applicant otherwise qualified but who scores in the middle quintile may be admitted if it is determined that he can be expected to do successful work in the institution to which he applies.

(3) An applicant otherwise eligible and who is among those in the lowest forty per cent may be admitted if a faculty committee feels that he should have an opportunity.

Iowa

(1) An applicant who is in the upper one-half of his high school graduating class and who meets specific course requirements will be admitted on an unqualified basis.

(2) An applicant who is not in the upper one-half may be required to take

special examinations and may be admitted by an admissions officer (a) unconditionally, (b) on probation, (c) tryout in summer session, or (d) be denied admission.

Oregon

(1) Graduates must have earned a "C" average in high school to gain unqualified admission.

(2) Those with less than a "C" may qualify by scoring in the upper sixty per cent on a standardized aptitude test or by making a "C" average in a full summer work load in college.

Before 1956, not a single state among the sixteen who participated in this study had adopted policies restricting enrollments on a system-wide basis. During the past five years, the four states whose policies were summarized above have adopted such system-wide restrictions, and three other states from among this group indicated that they were considering the adoption of such a policy. It should be noted that the states which have thus far adopted policies of system-wide application average only four institutions each, as contrasted with such states as Georgia and Oklahoma, whose systems contain four or five times as many institutions.

Admissions Policies in Thirty-Six State Colleges Outside Oklahoma

In the course of this study, responses were received from thirty-six state colleges in fourteen states outside Oklahoma (see Appendix B for a list of responding colleges). The majority of these colleges award both the bachelor's and the master's degree. Many of these institutions were formerly teachers' colleges, and a few still bear this designation. However, a few of the larger institutions have passed through

the stage of liberal arts college and are bidding to become universities. A tabular summary of the policies of these institutions follows:

Admissions Practices in 36 Selected State Colleges

Admit all H.S. Grads	Restrict Admissions	Require Grd. Avg.	Require Min. Rank in Class	Require Apt. or Ach. Test	Out-of-State Requirements
24	12	"C" - 2 "B" - 2	Upper 2/3 - 5 Upper 3/4 - 2	1	Same as res. - 27 Higher than resident - 9

Admissions policies for state colleges have traditionally been of the "Open" variety with all graduates of accredited high schools eligible to attend. Twenty-four of the thirty-six responding colleges in this survey now have this policy, but there seems to be a movement toward the restriction of enrollments. Five of the colleges require that their applicants rank in the upper two-thirds of their graduating class, and two require that students rank in the upper three-fourths. Four institutions require the presentation of a minimum grade average, while only one admits students on the basis of entrance tests alone.

Among the state colleges involved in this study, the size of the institution bears a close relationship to the stringency of admissions requirements. The two institutions which require their applicants to present a high school "B" average enroll 10,000 and 6,500 respectively, while those which require a "C" average for eligibility enroll an average of 3,500 students. In like manner, those colleges which require students to rank in the upper two-thirds of their high school class average

4,500 students, while those who accept students ranking in the upper three-fourths of their high school class enroll an average of 2,300 students.

Admissions Policies in Twenty-Six State and Land-Grant Universities

Twenty-six state and land-grant universities responded to a questionnaire sent out in the course of this study (see Appendix B for a list of responding universities). These universities were questioned concerning their admission policies and practices, and were invited to share their experiences in the fields of admissions and retention. A number of institutions sent copies of studies recently accomplished. Data from some of these studies, along with institutional policy statements relating to student admissions, constitute the basis for most of the tables and figures in this section of the report.

State universities, and particularly land-grant colleges and universities, have until the very recent past been free to accept all or a great majority of the students who presented themselves for admission. Since World War II, however, a number of these universities have mushroomed from a few thousand enrollees apiece up to twenty and even thirty thousand students spread over one to a half-dozen campus centers. This kind of growth has had its greatest impact in the most populous states of the Midwest.

Faced with large numbers of students and a shortage of resources, a few of the more influential universities - particularly in the upper Midwest - began a few years ago to initiate policies of selective admission which denied enrollment to the most poorly qualified applicants. In time, however, some policies which began as attempts to weed out those who seemed destined to fail have become "Competitive," in that they

now compete with each other and the private institutions for the most highly qualified students. The University of Michigan reported that ninety per cent of all of its freshmen came from among the students who ranked in the upper thirty per cent of their high school class. Michigan State University selected three-fourths of its freshmen from among the students who ranked in the top quarter of their high school class. Purdue University reported that its 1961 freshman class enrolled seventy-two per cent of its total from among those students who ranked in the top thirty per cent of their high school senior class. This freshman group contained only seventeen per cent who were in the lower one-half of their graduating class.

The three universities cited above are not typical of most state universities in that they have admissions practices which could be classed as "Competitive," rather than "Selective." Most state and land-grant universities which restrict admissions deny enrollment only to those who seem most likely to fail, generally those who rank in the lower one-third or one-fourth of their high school class.

An outline of the admissions policies of the twenty-six responding universities can be found in Table 1, pages 30-33. A short summary of these policies is included below:

Admissions Practices in 26 Selected State and Land-Grant Universities

Admit all H.S. Grads	Restrict Admissions	Require Grd. Avg.	Require Min. Rank in Class	Require Apt. or Ach. Test	Out-of-State Requirements
13	13	"C" - 4	Upper 3/4 - 1 Upper 2/3 - 4 Upper 1/2 - 2 Upper 1/3 - 1	5	Same as res. -7 Higher than resident - 19

TABLE 1

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS IN SELECTED STATE AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES, 1961-62

Institution	Admits all Grads of Accredited High Sch.	Requires Min. GPA or H.S. Rank	Req. Standard Aptitude or Achievement Test	Other Considerations	Nonresidents
University of Arizona	No	Upper 3/4	For counseling and placement	Recommended pattern of H. S. courses	Rank in upper 2/3 of H. S. class or score at acceptable level on test (SAT)
University of Arkansas	Yes		For placement only	Recommended pattern of H. S. courses	"C" average required
Colorado State University	No	Upper 2/3	SAT in provisional cases only	Recommended pattern of H. S. courses	Rank in upper 1/2 of H. S. class
Florida State University	No	"C" average & satisfactory score on Florida State-Wide 12th Grade Tests		Students not meeting minimum requirements considered on individual basis	Must rank in upper 1/2 of H. S. class and be recommended by principal
University of Florida	No	"C" average & satisfactory score on Florida State-Wide 12th Grade Tests		Students not meeting minimum requirements considered on individual basis	Must rank in upper 1/2 of H.S. class and be recommended by principal
Purdue University (As of fall, 1962)	No	Upper 1/2	CEEB	Applicants in lower 1/2 of H.S. class must take Purdue Entrance Exams.	Must rank in upper 1/4 of H. S. class and/or upper 1/4 of SAT
University of Kansas	Yes		Placement only		Must be a graduate of accredited sch. and have principal's recommendation
Kansas State University	Yes		ACT is Recommended	Recommended pattern of H. S. courses	Admitted on basis of ability to do "satisfactory work"

(Continued on Page 31)

Indiana University	No	Upper 1/2	Test to be required of all in 1964	This policy will be initiated in the fall of 1962. It is to become fully effective in 1964	Top 1/4 of SAT or ACT
Louisiana State University	Yes		Beginning in 1962 ACT test for counseling only	Certificate of character signed by supter-intendent and principal required	Must rank in upper 1/2 ordinarily
Michigan State University	No	Admissions decision based on multiple criteria - caliber of H.S. program, recommendation of principal, H.S. grades, etc. Of these, H.S. grades are most important. About 75% of freshmen students come from the top 1/4 of their H.S. classes			SAT scores should be presented by nonresident
University of Michigan	No	Preference given to upper 30%	CEEB tests required	There is no minimum rank or score requirement, but 90% of all freshmen come from the top 30% of H.S. classes	Same as residents, but out-of-state enrollment limited to 1/3 of total freshman class. Children of alumni given preference
University of Minnesota	Yes		ACT tests Placement only	Admission is by college or division. The two-year general college is open to all H.S. grads of accredited schools, while other colleges and divisions are more selective	"Above-average" H. S. work should be presented
University of Missouri	Yes	Upper 2/3	In provision-al cases only	Although all H. S. grads are eligible to enroll, applicants who are in the lower 1/3 of their H.S. classes are admitted on probation or in some session other than the fall term. Most applicants in this group advised against enrollment	Upper 1/2 with exceptions made for students sponsored by alumni and residents of the St. Louis and Kansas City areas
University of Nebraska	Yes			Requires sixteen units of H.S. work from four-year H.S., thirteen units from three-year school	Upper 1/2 of class and recommenda-tion of principal
University of New Mexico	No	"C" average	For guidance only	Recommends pattern of H.S. work	Same as resident requirements

(Continued on Page 32)

Table 1 - Continued

Institution	Admits all Grads of Accredited High Sch.	Requires Min. GPA or H.S. Rank	Req. Standard Aptitude or Achievement Test	Other Considerations	Nonresidents
Ohio State University (As of June, 1962)	No	Upper 2/3	In provisional cases only	Ohio statutes require that graduates of first-class H.S.'s be admitted. However, applicants in the lowest 1/3 of their H.S. classes or who are unranked will be admitted in the summer, winter, or spring quarters only unless they score in the upper 2/3 on the ACT test	Upper 1/3
Ohio University	No	Upper 2/3	OSPE for counseling Only - ACT recommended	Although Ohio statutes require the admission of all H.S. grads, students who rank in lower 1/3 of H.S. classes or who score in lowest 1/5 on the psychological exam will be given "special warning" admission. Those so admitted will not be allowed to enroll in the fall session but are eligible at any other term.	
Oregon State University	No	"C" average	Placement only	Three plans are used: (1) "C" average in H.S.; or (2) combined score of 880 on verbal and math sections of SAT; or (3) must present a "C" average from a full summer term of work	(1) Must have "B" average in H.S., or (2) score a minimum of 887 on the verbal and math sections of the SAT, or (3) present 12 hrs. of college work with a "C" average
University of Oregon	No	"C" average	Placement only	Same as Oregon State University	Same as Oregon State University
State University of South Dakota	Yes		ACT Placement only		Upper 1/2
University of Tennessee	Yes		ACT Guidance and placement only	Tests used for counseling and placement. Those who score in lower 1/4 on test or who are in the lowest 1/4 of H.S. class advised against enrolling, or advised to enroll in summer session	Upper 1/2

(Continued on Page 33)

North Texas State University	Yes	ACT for placement only	School will accept no student whose transcript reads "not recommended for college."	Same as resident requirements
Texas Tech College	Yes	SAT for Guidance only		Upper 3/4 of H. S. class
University of Oklahoma	Yes	For counseling and placement only		Upper 1/2 of H. S. class (Effective Fall 1962)
Oklahoma State University	Yes	For counseling and placement only		Upper 1/2 of H. S. class (Effective Fall 1962)

(Table 1 - Concluded)

As in the case of state colleges, state universities with the most stringent admissions policies enroll the greatest number of students. The three institutions which accept only those students above the upper one-half of their graduating class have an average enrollment of 25,000 students. Those who deny admissions to only the lowest-ranking applicants enroll some 11,000 students on the average. The thirteen institutions which accept all high school graduates average some 10,000 students.

It the small number of institutions included in this study is an accurate sample of the regions surveyed, it would appear that about half the state and land-grant universities restrict the admission of freshmen students. Universities in the Midwest and West are more likely to maintain such policies than are comparable institutions in the South and Southwest.

There appears to be a tendency for universities to require higher standards for out-of-state students than do state colleges. Nineteen of the twenty-six universities require out-of-state students to present higher qualifications than residents, while only nine of the thirty-six colleges surveyed set up standards for out-of-state students than for residents.

Admissions Policies of Institutions in
The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education

There are three types of institutions in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education - state universities, state senior colleges and state junior colleges. Of the eighteen institutions in the State System, two are universities, nine are senior colleges and seven are junior colleges. There is at present no formal state policy or policies on admission of resident students, either by type of institution or on a

system-wide basis. Heretofore, each institution has developed its own policy with regard to the admission of resident students. These separate policies have become effective upon approval by The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Although there has never been a formal, system-wide admission policy in Oklahoma, practices with regard to admissions have been rather uniform from institution to institution. There is an assumption - not written into the regulations of The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education or formalized by Constitution or statute, but nevertheless understood - that all graduates of accredited Oklahoma high schools are eligible to enroll in any institution in the State System. A formal recognition of this assumption appears in every current policy statement of the eighteen institutions in the State System.

An examination of Table 2, pages 36-37 also reveals that all institutions of the State System require applicants to submit scores from the American College Testing Program. These test scores are used principally for counseling and guidance purposes. It should be recognized that no attempt was made to include in Table 2 all the detailed information contained in the written policy statements of the various institutions in the State System. Only those items are listed which tend to illustrate some of the more significant differences and similarities.

Compared with other states, Oklahoma has always enrolled a high percentage of its high school graduates in college. As early as 1958, slightly more than one-half of Oklahoma high school graduates entered the first year of college.[11] Since

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[11] Home State and Migration of American College Students, Fall 1958. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, December 1958, p. 23.

TABLE 2

ADMISSIONS POLICIES IN THE OKLAHOMA STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION, 1961

Institution	Admits on basis of H.S. Trans.	Req. Adm. Test	Req. Min. GPA	Accepts non-Grads on basis of __ H.S. units	Other Considerations
Oklahoma University	Yes	ACTx	No	14*	*Must also score in top 1/4 on test, be recommended by principal, and be in top 1/4 of H. S. class
Oklahoma State University	Yes	ACT	No		
Oklahoma College for Women	Yes	ACT	No		Must present evidence of good moral character
Panhandle A&M College	Yes	ACT	No		
Langston University	Yes	ACT	No		
Central State College	Yes	ACT	No		
East Central State College	Yes	ACT*	No		*Low scores on test advised against enrolling
Northeastern State College	Yes	ACT	No	15*	*If also enrolled in H. S.
Northwestern State College	Yes	ACT	No		

x All institutions in the Oklahoma State System require ACT test for counseling and guidance purposes only.

(Continued on Page 37)

Southeastern State College	Yes	ACT	No		
Southwestern State College	Yes*	ACT	No		*Student admitted on probation if record not satisfactory
Cameron State Agricultural College	Yes*	ACT	No		*Must be at least 15 years of age. Reduced load for students with poor record
Connors State Agricultural College	Yes	ACT	No		
Eastern Oklahoma A & M College	Yes	ACT	No		
Murray State Agricultural College	Yes	ACT*	No*		*Student with less than "C" or in lowest 1/4 of ACT limited to 14 hours
Northeastern Oklahoma A & M College	Yes	ACT	No	14*	*Must also score in top 1/4 of ACT, be in top 1/4 of H.S. class, and be recommended by principal
Northern Oklahoma Junior College	Yes	ACT	No	15	
Oklahoma Military Academy	Yes	ACT	No	15	

(Table 2 - Concluded)

1958, this percentage has continued to rise, at the rate of approximately 1.5 per cent each year. In the spring of 1961, Oklahoma high schools graduated 27,544 students.[12] In the fall of 1961, Oklahoma colleges and universities enrolled more than 17,000 first-time-entering students, of which slightly more than 13,000 were enrolled in state-supported institutions.[13] Even if a liberal discount is made for out-of-state enrollments, it appears that Oklahoma is approaching the sixty per cent figure in the enrollment of its high school graduates in college. If the current trend continues, the State could possibly enroll sixty-five of every 100 high school graduates by 1970.

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[12]Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma Public School Statistics at Close of School Year, (October 19, 1961), mimeographed tables.

[13]United States Office of Education, Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education, 1961: Institutional Data, United States Office of Education, Circular No. 675, (Washington, D. C., 1961), pp. 25-26.

Part Four

STUDENT RETENTION

Although the admission and retention of students is usually spoken of as one area of concern, the two topics are quite often treated as distinctly separate matters. This is not surprising since research in the field of retention is difficult and often unrewarding, principally because of certain factors which hamper investigation into this problem.

The success of an admissions policy is judged by the scholastic performance of students who are admitted, but the criterion of success in the area of retention is much more nebulous. Shall a retention policy be declared a failure if a considerable number of the students enrolled in a given institution fail to graduate? Shall a young woman who completes two years of college work and then withdraws to rear a family be rated a success or a failure? Does a young man suffer permanent psychological damage when he fails to measure up scholastically at the state university, or does this experience enhance his overall chance of success in life? Since it is difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate the amount of good or harm that one or two years of college makes in the life of the society or the individual, it becomes necessary to measure the success of a retention policy in terms of graduation, even though such a measure is arbitrary in nature.

Another factor which complicates research in this field is the unavailability of much of the data needed on which to base judgments. It is difficult to locate

students who drop out of college, and it is almost impossible to ascertain the real reasons for such withdrawal. Much of the information relating to transfer of students is not accurate, and it is difficult to determine how many who withdraw later return and graduate. The researcher is sometimes at a loss to know whether a student has graduated or whether he has entered an advanced professional program without taking his bacculaureate degree. Another stumbling block is the great length of time needed to complete research of this nature, since a minimum of four years is needed to follow a freshman group through graduation.

Perhaps the most recent major research project of national significance in the area of retention was completed by Robert Iffert, whose study was published by the United States Office of Education in 1958. Iffert followed the progress of more than 12,000 college students who enrolled for the first time in the fall of 1950. Students were divided into three categories: (1) those who attended public institutions; (2) those who enrolled in independent, non-church related schools; and (3) those who enrolled in private, church-related colleges. At the end of four years, the length of normal progression through college, Iffert compiled the results.

On the following page are Iffert's summaries of first-year attrition rates and graduation rates, by type of institution.[1] This tabular material shows that 27.3 per cent of all the students enrolled in college in the fall of 1950 dropped out during or at the end of the first year. The public institutions lost more students the first year than

[1]Robert E. Iffert, Retention and Withdrawal of College Students, Bulletin 1958, No. 1, United States Office of Education, (Washington, D. C., 1957), pp. 16-18.

did either of the independent groups. In like manner, the public institutions fell below the independent groups in the percentage of graduates at the end of the four-year period. The independent, non-church related group of colleges graduated almost one-half (49.6%) of the students who entered originally, while the public institutions graduated about one-third (33%). Nationally, the graduation rate was 39.5 per cent.

Graduation and First-Year Attrition Rates in Four-Year Institutions
By Type of Institutional Control

Period of Attendance	Type of Control			
	Total	Public	Church Related	Non-Church Related
Dropped out during or at end of 1st year - - -	27.3%	30.9%	29.3%	19.8%
Graduated from Institution of 1st registration in four years - - -	39.5	33.0	43.7	49.6

Although the attrition rates for the public institutions were much higher the first year than those in the non-church related, independent colleges, the second and third year rates were more nearly the same for all types. This point has significance in the determination of policy for public institutions. The student who persists through the first year apparently has almost an equal chance of graduating, whether he is enrolled in a public or independent college. This would suggest that careful attention be given to this transition year in public institutions.

Many claim, and their claims have a measure of validity, that the public institutions lose more students because the quality of the entering product is not as

high as in some of the more selective private colleges and universities. Iffert compared the rank-in-class for all three types of institutions included in his study and found that the independent, non-church related students ranked higher than either of the other groups.[2] It could logically be expected that the type of college with the highest quality of student would have the lowest attrition rates and the highest graduation rates, and this is precisely what the results showed. The same does not hold true, however, when the public colleges are compared with the church-related group.

Although average high school rank-in-class was higher for the public institutions than for the church-related group, the latter actually graduated 107 more students per 1,000 entrants than did the public colleges. This would suggest that other factors are in operation in addition to the quality of the entering student. It also gives a measure of support to those who maintain that admission and retention can be treated as two separate concerns, since it has been demonstrated that it is possible to retain poor students as well as to "wash out" good ones. At any rate, it can be shown that a relatively low-quality entering group does not necessarily guarantee a high attrition rate.

Institutional Studies on Retention

A number of institutional studies are available for purposes of comparison with the national averages. The University of Tennessee followed its 1952 entering

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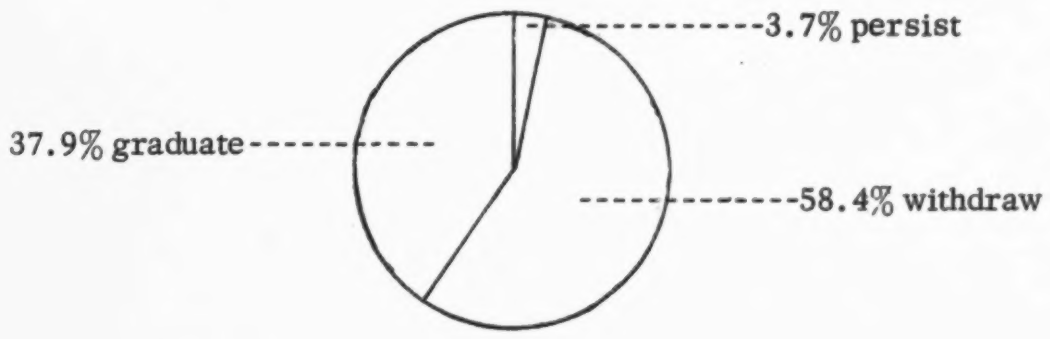
[2]Robert E. Iffert, Ibid., p. 17.

freshman class for eight years, and found that about thirty-eight per cent of the original group had graduated by 1960.[3]

Withdrawal-Graduation Rate for The University of Tennessee, 1952-1960



The dropout for the first year at Tennessee was lower than the 30.9 per cent figure for public institutions in Iffert's study, but the four-year graduation figures were well below those reported in the national study. Only 15.3 per cent of the University of Tennessee's students graduated at the end of the normal four years as compared to the national average for public institutions of thirty-three per cent. A similar four-year study in other institutions show the University of Colorado (1958) percentage to be 23.2 per cent, while the State University of Iowa and Northern Illinois University graduated about one of every three within a four-year period.[4] These two latter figures are identical with those found by Iffert relating to public institutions.

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[3]James R. Montgomery and C. B. Collier, A Survey of the Withdrawal-Graduation Rate of A Freshman Class, (Office of Institutional Research, The University of Tennessee, Vol. 1, 1960), p. 1.

[4]James R. Montgomery and C. B. Collier, Ibid., p. 7.

In a University of Illinois study conducted on the entering freshman class of 1950, E. C. Seyler discovered that fifty-six per cent of those who ranked in the top one-fourth of their high school graduating class persisted to graduation at the University of Illinois within five years after entrance. Only 8.2 per cent of those in the lowest one-fourth had graduated five years later.[5]

Five-Year Graduation Percentages at the University of Illinois, By High School Quartile Rank

Students' Rank in Class	Percent Graduated in Five Years
Top 1/4	56.40
Next highest 1/4	31.66
Next lowest 1/4	17.05
Lowest 1/4	8.24

Students in this university who ranked in the lowest one-fourth of their high school class had only one chance in twelve of graduating within five years, while those in the top one-fourth had better than one chance in two.

In the same study, Seyler investigated the grade-point averages of 1,218 students who had dropped out of the University of Illinois. Of this number who withdrew, 500 students were in good standing at the time of departure. Of the 433 students who entered the University of Illinois in the top one-fourth of their high school class, 262 (60%) were in good standing. Of those in the lowest one-fourth of their high school class, thirty-nine out of 143 (27%) were in good standing. Because the

[5]E. C. Seyler, A Study of The Entering Freshman Class of September, 1950, Office of Admission and Records, University of Illinois, Mimeo, 1955.

University of Illinois has a somewhat selective student body, a greater number of their dropouts came from the higher ranking students than came from the lower levels.

Number and Percent of Drop-Outs in Good Standing at the Time of Withdrawal, By High School Quartile Rank, University of Illinois, 1950

Students' Rank In Class	Number in Quartile	In Good Standing	
		No.	Percent
Top 1/4	433	262	60
Next Highest 1/4	375	139	37
Next Lowest 1/4	267	62	23
Lowest 1/4	143	39	27

The University of Illinois study referred to above indicates that many students withdraw from college for reasons other than scholastic difficulty, since 500 of the 1,218 students included in that group were in good standing at the time of withdrawal. Another indication of this fact was found at the University of Tennessee. Forty per cent of all students at this university who had college grade averages between "C" and "C+" withdrew before graduation, and nearly twenty-five per cent of the students with "A-" averages dropped out before graduation.[6]

In a follow-up study of 1,488 University of Minnesota students who had been enrolled in the spring of 1959, but who did not subsequently enroll in the fall quarter, over fifty per cent of the dropouts studied were in the top one-third of their high

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[6]James R. Montgomery and C. B. Collier, op. cit. p. 3.

school graduating class.[7] Other institutional studies seem to substantiate the position that a majority of those who drop out do so primarily for reasons other than lack of ability. This is not meant to infer that there is not a high positive correlation between ability and persistence to graduation.

The University of Michigan reports that if a student is in the top ten per cent of his class, his chances of making a "C" average (and hence of eventually graduating) are eighty-five in 100. If the student is in the middle of his high school class, his chances have dropped to about fifty in 100. The rate of freshmen attrition at the University of Michigan is abnormally low - averaging some eight or nine per cent over the past few years.[8]

It is evident from the findings of the foregoing institutional studies that there is a definite relationship between a student's high-school achievement and his chances of graduating from college. Many students withdraw, however, for reasons other than poor academic grades. The size of the first-year attrition rate varies greatly from institution to institution, ranging from approximately eight per cent at the University of Michigan to about thirty-three per cent of the entering group at several other colleges and universities who responded in the course of this study.

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[7]Earl N. Ringo, A Follow-Up Study of Students Enrolled at The University of Minnesota Spring 1959 (Bureau of Institutional Research, University of Minnesota, October 1960), p. 6.

[8]Byron L. Groesbeck, How Can We Best Use Admission Data To Counsel and Select Students, (Office of Admissions and Records, University of Michigan, November 1959), mimeographed.

State Level Policies and Practices

Although about twenty states have uniform policies or practices relating to the admission of students, it was found in the course of this study that only two states have system-wide retention policies. Even more than student admissions, retention has in the past been considered a matter of institutional, rather than public policy. The traditional argument has been that any policy applying indiscriminately to a group of institutions would not be sound, since there are wide differences among institutions and among student bodies. Now, however, with certain states moving toward standardized policies of admission, the subject of retention has been thrown open for new consideration.

Thus far, little has been done at the state level with regard to research in student retention. Such studies should perhaps encompass all institutions within a state - public and independent - and preferably should extend over a period of at least six years. An approach of this type should provide reasonably accurate data on transfer and persistence.

So far, only Arizona and Iowa have adopted uniform system-wide retention policies. Both of these states also have uniform policies on admissions. In the case of Iowa, the policy adopted applies to freshman students only. The two policy statements will be reviewed below.

Arizona

All students classified as freshmen who have a cumulative grade point index of less than 1.25 at the end of the first academic year are disqualified (grade point index is based on A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, D=1.0). All students classed as

sophomores who have a cumulative average of less than 1.50 are disqualified. All students classed as juniors who have a grade point index of less than 1.75 are disqualified. A grade point index of 2.0 is required for graduation. A senior student who has failed to meet this requirement may enroll in an additional fifteen semester hours in further attempt to achieve the 2.0 requirement.

Iowa

A freshman in any one of the three Iowa institutions of higher education is normally allowed to enroll in both semesters of the freshman year, regardless of his grade average. At the end of two semesters, however, each student's record is reviewed, and if it is found that his grade point index is less than 1.5, (C-), he is suspended (grade-point index is based on A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, D=1.0).

This policy was adopted in Iowa when it was found that a student who makes less than a 2.0 (C) grade point average his first year had only one chance in five of persisting to graduation.

Retention Policies of Selected Institutions Outside Oklahoma

Policies relating to retention of students in public senior colleges and universities are rather uniform throughout the nation. Because of the universal practice of requiring a "C" average for graduation, the great majority of institutions have developed their retention policies to encourage students to achieve at or above this level. The majority of institutions establish somewhat lower standards for the freshman student than are required of the upper-classman, but he is ordinarily expected to attain the "C" average within four semesters or be subject to academic

probation. Academic suspension usually occurs whenever a student who has been placed on probation fails to improve his academic performance.

Most of the institutions surveyed in the course of this study maintain faculty committees which sit in judgment on probation, suspension and reinstatement cases. It is apparent that the various institutions make every effort to keep the student in school as long as he has any possible chance to meet requirements for graduation. The percentage of students who are actually dismissed from college because of academic deficiency is not excessive, ranging from ten to fifteen per cent of those who withdraw.

There appears to be little relationship between the retention policies of institutions and their practices with regard to retention. The fact that retention policies are similar does not mean that institutions with like policies will retain a similar percentage of their students. It is, therefore, much more rewarding to study an institution's retention practice than to peruse its stated retention policy.

Retention Policies in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education

Oklahoma does not have a formal system-wide policy of retention for its institutions. In general, it may be said that Oklahoma is typical of other states, in that the different types of institutions have rather consistent policies. The two-year colleges operate under regulations which are perhaps slightly less stringent than those of the senior colleges and universities. (See Table 3, page 50). Ordinarily, a student in a two-year state college will be placed on academic probation when he falls below a "D" average, or when he fails fifty per cent or more of the work in which he is enrolled. He is subject to suspension if, while on probation, he fails to make

TABLE 3

RETENTION POLICIES IN THE OKLAHOMA STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION, 1961

Institution	A student is placed on academic probation when he . . .	A student is suspended when he . . .
University of Oklahoma	Fails 40% of work in which he is enrolled .	Fails 40% of work while on probation, or when he fails 2/3 of total enrollment in any term.
Oklahoma State University	Fails to make satisfactory progress. (See table below.) Is suspended when he achieves less than a "C" average in the spring semester unless his cumulative GPA is equal to the following: Less than 36 hours, 1.4; 36-54 hours, 1.5; 55-73 hours, 1.6; 74-90 hours, 1.7; over 90 - 1.8.	
Oklahoma College for Women	Makes less than normal progress (1.5 1st sem., etc., per schedule)	Fails to achieve a cumulative GPA of 1.5 the 1st semester; 1.6 the 2nd semester; 1.7 the 3rd semester; 1.8 the 4th semester.
Panhandle A & M College	Fails 40% of work in which he is enrolled.	Student remains on probation unless he passes 61% of work. Student failing 40% of work at mid-semester will be dropped.
Langston University	Fails 1/3 of work in which he is enrolled.	Fails 1/3 of work while on probation. (Note: A freshman who earns less than 40 grade points is placed on probation.)
Central State College	Fails "substantial portion" of work in which he is enrolled, or is not making satisfactory progress at end of two semesters. If he does not improve while on probation, he is suspended.	
East Central State College	Fails 40% of hours enrolled in, or 5 semester hours.	Fails 40% of work or 5 hours while on probation.
Northeastern State College	Fails to make a "C" average in 12 semester hours.	Fails to make a "C" in 12 hours while on probation.
Northwestern State College	Fails to maintain a cumulative "C" average.	Fails to achieve a cumulative "C" average.

(Continued on Page 51)

Southeastern State College	Fails to pass 12 semester hours and make 18 grade points	Fails to pass 12 hours and earn 24 grade points while on probation.
Southwestern State College	Fails 40% of work.	Fails to attain a cumulative average of 1.5 or pass 61% work.
Cameron State Agricultural College	Makes less than 1.0 GPA on work in which he is enrolled.	Fails to make definite improvement while on probation.
Connors State Agricultural College	Fails to pass 75% of work in which he is enrolled.	Fails to pass 75% of hours in which he is enrolled while on probation.
Eastern Oklahoma A & M College	Fails 50% of hours in which he is enrolled.	. . .
Murray State Agricultural College	Fails to pass 50% hours enrolled in, and earns a GPA of 1.0.	Students whose scholarship is considered unsatisfactory for two semesters will be suspended.
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M	Makes less than a 1.5 average on hours in which he is enrolled	Fails to attain a grade point average of 1.5.
Northern Oklahoma Junior College	Fails 50% of work enrolled in for two semesters	Fails to attain "C" average at the end of nine weeks of the probationary semester. This results in perm. dismissal.
Oklahoma Military Academy	Fails more than 50% of work enrolled in.	Earns a grade of "F" in the same subject in which he previously made an "F" grade.

(Table 3 - Concluded)

improvement. Five of the seven state junior colleges conform to this pattern, while two have established somewhat higher retention standards.

There is little difference in the written statements of the Oklahoma senior colleges and the universities, even though their practices may differ. As a general rule, all institutions within this group require that a student maintain a "C" average in order to be eligible for graduation. A first-year student is not always held rigidly to this standard, but he is expected to attain it within a given number of semesters or be subject to suspension. When the student falls below the grade average required for graduation, he is usually placed on academic probation, and is subject to suspension if he fails to show improvement during this period.

Part Five

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Following are summarized the major findings and conclusions drawn from the data of this study and presented in Part Three and Part Four of this report. In addition to Oklahoma, there were sixteen other state systems and sixty-two state universities and senior colleges included in the study. These state systems and institutions were selected as being typical of the Oklahoma situation so that the data would have particular significance in policy formulation for The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

Admissions Policies and Practices

State Systems

1. The area of student admissions to public colleges and universities is more and more being recognized as being in the realm of state-level policy, and is becoming correspondingly less the exclusive concern of individual institutions.

2. Of the sixteen states included in this study which have some formal responsibility for coordination of higher education, four reported a system-wide policy of restrictive admissions that applied to all institutions in the system. All of these states have adopted such policies within the last five years.

3. Three of the sixteen states included in this study reported system-wide policies which required the admission of all high school graduates at all institutions, and nine states left the matter of admissions to the individual institutions.

4. There is presently no formal system-wide policy regarding the admission of Oklahoma high school graduates to colleges and universities in the State System. Oklahoma colleges and universities

do observe a uniform practice, however, in that they all admit graduates of accredited Oklahoma high schools.

5. In 1960, eleven of the fifty states had system-wide admission policies either by statute or regulation - which required their public colleges and universities to accept graduates of their accredited high schools. Another ten states had no such policies, but in practice admitted all high school graduates.

Institutional Level

1. Of the twenty-six state and land-grant universities included in this study, thirteen institutions, or one-half, reported they had adopted restrictive policies with regard to the admission of resident students.

2. Of the thirty-six state colleges included in this study, twelve institutions, or one-third, reported they had adopted restrictive policies with regard to the admission of resident students.

3. Nineteen of the twenty-six state universities and nine of the thirty-six state colleges reported that admission requirements for out-of-state students were higher than for resident students.

4. State institutions - particularly state universities - are progressively adopting admission policies which are more selective.

5. In colleges and universities that have relatively low admission policies the majority of students who are admitted rank in the upper one-half of their high school graduating class.

6. The factor most frequently used by colleges and universities included in this study to select students for admission to college is rank in the high school graduating class. Other factors frequently used include high school grades, principal's recommendation, and scores on standardized aptitude or achievement tests.

7. Recent research indicates that a combination of these and other factors provides a much more accurate basis for predicting college performance than does any single factor.

8. An analysis of the sixty-two colleges and universities included in this study suggests that there is greater interest in selective admissions among the larger institutions than among the smaller institutions.

Retention Policies and Practices

State-Level

1. Of the sixteen states included in this study which have some formal responsibility for state-level coordination of higher education, two states reported having retention policies applying to all institutions in the state system.

2. Oklahoma does not have a formal system-wide policy with regard to retention of students in institutions of the State System.

Institutional Level

1. In some instances there is considerable difference between policy and practice with regard to the retention of students in college.

2. A recent national study indicates that the rate of graduation in regular progression from the institution of first registration is approximately forty per cent. When transfers are included, the proportion graduating in four years from all institutions is approximately fifty per cent. It is estimated that the proportion graduating approaches sixty per cent when students are included who require more than four years to complete college.

Implications for Oklahoma

Each state should determine public policies regarding admission and retention of college students in the context of its own philosophic, economic and social setting. While similar patterns exist among the several states studied with regard to admission and retention policies and practices, many dissimilarities were also noticed. Both the institutions and the states varied widely in terms of the number and type of educational institutions maintained, amount of financial support, number and type of students admitted, number of high school graduates who go to college, history and tradition, and in many other ways.

Admission policies which are feasible in one state may or may not, therefore, be appropriate for another state. A policy for Arizona, which has only three public senior colleges and universities, may or may not be satisfactory in Oklahoma, which has eighteen public colleges and universities in its State System. A policy for Wisconsin, which has less than forty per cent of its high school graduates going on to college, would not necessarily be appropriate in Oklahoma, which has nearly sixty per cent of its graduates continuing. A policy for Florida, whose population has nearly doubled in the last decade, might not be appropriate in Oklahoma, whose population has remained relatively stable during this same period. Each state included in this study has resolved or is studying admissions and retention policies in the context of its own problems and needs.

There are benefits to be derived from studying problems and practices of other states. These result from: (1) studying their findings and experiences as a basis of assessing the possible impact of alternatives which are considered, (2) inventorying the number and variety of alternatives which may be available to consider, and (3) evaluating the successes and mistakes of others. It is in these ways that this study should be of greatest value to The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education as they deliberate and plan for Oklahoma policy on these subjects.

Alternatives regarding admission to and retention in college should be carefully studied in terms of their impact upon students, educational institutions and the state. In this study, findings of recent state and national research were applied to Oklahoma data in an effort to assess the possible impact of alternative policy decisions pertaining to selective admissions. While these types of analyses are useful in arriving at rough

estimates, they are probably not sufficiently precise for establishing public policy for Oklahoma. Any state-level policies made with regard to admission and retention of students in Oklahoma will affect every institution in the State System as well as many Oklahoma youth. Until more complete data on the characteristics of entering freshmen students at Oklahoma colleges and universities are available, there is no accurate way to assess the consequences of any change in policy decision.

Admission and Retention Policies should be based on sound principles which reflect desirable outcomes. A policy which is established and subsequently proves to be administratively unfeasible may lead to a "short circuiting" of intent. A policy which requires excessive expenditures to execute may divert funds from other equally important institutional programs. A policy which is not attuned to the times may weaken the entire State System. For these reasons, a carefully developed list of guiding principles against which alternative policies are measured may forestall undesired and unforseen consequences.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education should formulate policies regarding admission and retention of students at institutions in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. As a matter of procedure in formulating policy, the Chancellor and staff with the advice and assistance of the Council of Presidents of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, and in consultation with the Oklahoma High School-College Articulation Committee should prepare a statement of guiding principles accompanied by a recommendation regarding policy on these matters for State Regents' consideration. This should be done at an early date.

Any policy statements formulated now should be reviewed for further improvement as soon as more pertinent data are available (these data will be forthcoming as these subjects are given further study as a part of the state-wide self-study of Oklahoma higher education now under way).

APPENDIX A

List of State-Wide Boards of Higher Education Included in This Study

ARIZONA
Board of Regents of the Universities and State College of Arizona
Myron R. Holbert, Budget Officer

FLORIDA
Board of Control of Florida
J. B. Culpepper, Executive Director

GEORGIA
University System of Georgia
Harmon Caldwell, Chancellor

IDAHO
State Board of Education and The Board of Regents of the University of Idaho
D. F. Engelking, Executive Director

IOWA
State Board of Regents
David A. Dancer, Secretary

KANSAS
Board of Regents, Educational Institutions
Max Bickford, Secretary

KENTUCKY
Council on Public Higher Education
Ted C. Gilbert, Executive Secretary

MISSISSIPPI
Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning
Dr. E. R. Jobe, Executive Secretary

MONTANA
System of Higher Education
Russell Barthell, Executive Secretary

NEW MEXICO
Board of Educational Finance
Wm. R. McConnell, Executive Secretary

NORTH CAROLINA
Board of Higher Education
William C. Archie, Director

NORTH DAKOTA
State Board of Higher Education
A. E. Mead, Commissioner

OREGON
State Board of Higher Education
Earl M. Pallett, Secretary of the Board

SOUTH DAKOTA
State Board of Regents for Higher Education
Elgie B. Coacher, Executive Secretary

TEXAS
Texas Commission on Higher Education
Ralph Green, Director

VIRGINIA
State Council of Higher Education
William Hugh McFarlane, Director

APPENDIX B

List of State-Supported Colleges And Universities Included In This Study

I -State Colleges

Adams State College, Colorado
Arizona State College
Arkansas Polytechnic College
Arkansas State College
Arlington State College, Texas
Ball State Teachers College, Indiana

Bemidji State College, Minnesota
Bowling Green State University, Ohio
Central Missouri State College
Central State College, Ohio
Colorado State College
East Tennessee State College

East Texas State College
Eastern Michigan University
Eastern New Mexico University
Indiana State College
Kansas State College of Pittsburg
Mankato State College, Minnesota

McNeese State College, Louisiana
Memphis State University, Tennessee
Miami University, Ohio
Nebraska State Teachers College at Kearney
Nebraska State Teachers College, Wayne
Nebraska State Teachers College, Peru

Northwest Missouri State College
Northern State Teachers College, South Dakota
Portland State College, Oregon
Southeast Missouri State College
Southeastern Louisiana College
Southwest Missouri State College

Sul Ross State College, Texas
Texas College of Arts and Industries
Southwestern Louisiana (University of)
Western Michigan University
Wisconsin State College, Eau Claire
Wisconsin State College, Whitewater

II -State & Land-Grant Universities

University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
Colorado State University
University of Florida
Florida State University
Indiana University

University of Kansas
Kansas State University
Purdue University
Louisiana State University
Michigan State University
University of Michigan

University of Minnesota
University of Missouri
University of Nebraska
University of New Mexico
Ohio State University
Ohio University

Oregon State University
University of Oregon
State University of South Dakota
University of Tennessee
North Texas State University
Texas Technological College

University of Oklahoma
Oklahoma State University